



RESEARCH GATHERINGS

It has been an exceptionally busy summer of conferences, seminars and workshops all across campus. Here's a sample of what went on.

At a recent symposium in the Aula Maxima, Professor Éamon O'Shea (pictured above) launched a report highlighting the **positive effect of reminiscence therapy for dementia sufferers**. The report by the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology shows the important role reminiscence can play in improving the quality of life of people with dementia in long-stay care. The results come from the largest trial of its kind internationally, carried out over three years and involving 300 dementia sufferers. Professor O'Shea explained that "everyone gains through a more person-centred approach to care in long-stay settings."

September saw Galway Harbour, and the Aula Maxima, taken over by robotic sailing fans, when Galway hosted the **World Robotic Sailing Championship and the International Robotic Sailing Conference**. The event saw teams from Galway, Wales, Finland, France, Portugal, the US and Russia racing their fully autonomous and unmanned sailing boats, up to 2.5m in length. The US Naval Academy were overall winners with their boat SeaQuester. Congratulations to Dr Fearghal Morgan (Electrical and Electronic Engineering) and Dermot Tynan of Hewlett-Packard for organising such an entertaining week.

A **symposium on youth development and sport** took place in August, organised by three UNESCO Chairs in the field of youth studies from NUI Galway (Professor Pat Dolan), University of Ulster and Penn State University. Held in Croke Park, delegates heard of the pressing need for innovative strategies to engage youth around the world. According to the

symposium organisers, with half of the world's population aged 25 or younger and with 85% of those living in less developed countries, active engagement of youth is essential to international security and stability.

A conference in June raised awareness of best practice in **responding to child to parent violence**. Declan Coogan (School of Political Science and Sociology) described the issue as "a hidden but growing social problem in Ireland and across Europe." The conference aimed to assist social workers, psychologists, psychotherapists, juvenile justice practitioners and others working with children and families to develop skills in addressing the problem. It was organised on campus as part of the EU-funded DAPHNE programme across five countries called the Responding to Child to Parent Violence project.

The 12th **Galway Symposium on Higher Education** took place in Áras Moyola in June. This year the focus was on fieldwork, practical and experiential learning, with presentations on different forms of active engagement and how they can enhance the student learning experience. Keynote speaker, Dr Helen Walkington, previous head of Geography, Earth and Environmental Studies at the UK's Higher Education Academy, discussed how students can participate in, and learn from, research, and this was followed by a series of workshops, practical demonstrations and exhibits.

History hosted an **international conference on World War I** to mark the 100th anniversary of its beginning. The theme of the conference was

'Small Nations and Colonial Peripheries' and it focused on how the war impacted peoples, such as the Irish, who found themselves on the edge of great powers and empires. Twelve speakers discussed how the war linked ordinary men and women from across the world to what began as a European conflict.

The 18th annual **Health Promotion Research Centre Summer Conference** took place in Áras Moyola in June, with a series of lectures, workshops and presentations that focused on 'Applying the Principles of Health Promotion to Population Health Improvement', particularly in Ireland. At the conference, keynote speaker, Professor Louise Potvin of the Université de Montréal, argued for interventions in public health to be based on clear good-quality research that includes the innovative practices used by practitioners and community organisations to improve wellbeing in their localities.

The Moore Institute hosted the annual **International Chartism Conference** in July, on the theme 'Ireland and British Democracy'. Delegates explored the positive and negative ways in which Irish nationalism and the British radical movement, Chartism, coalesced in the mid-nineteenth century. The conference was organised by Dr Laurence Marley (History) and launched by Professor David Lloyd of the University of California in the Mechanics' Institute on Middle Street, Galway city.

In September, the J. E. Cairnes School of Business and Economics hosted the **Irish Society of New Economists Conference**.